



**USDA Virtual University**

**School of Talent  
Management**

**Aspiring Leader Program**

**Leadership Competency  
Self Assessment**

**Building Blocks for  
Workforce Development**

**Based on  
OPM Competencies**

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# What is a Competency?

A competency is the integration of one's knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes in order to perform effectively on the job. Competencies are observable and measurable behaviors, which are critical to successful individual and agency performance. Competencies applied through behaviors help to ensure organizational/mission critical results and outcomes.

The 10 foundational leadership competencies for **all employees** form the foundation upon which leadership success is built. Knowledge, skill and ability in each of these ten competencies are the basis on which to build success as a leader.

Each of the five organizational leadership levels builds upon the foundation. Even though an upward progression of employee levels is shown, the progression of leadership development is not always linear. Leadership competencies displayed for each organizational leadership level in this chart are situational, and are not cast in stone.

As times change, our mission will require that the organization make changes too. The competencies leaders need now may not be the same competencies that leaders will need in the future. The Competency Chart may need to be updated as organizational changes evolve in the future.

This self-assessment is designed to educate leaders at the All Employees and Team Leader levels regarding the competencies required for their success. For the leader who has reached their target level, a competency self assessment can be useful to help identify strengths and areas for improvement for the purpose of continuous learning. For the individual aspiring to the next leadership level, the Leadership Essentials Certification Program assessment tool can be used to help create an IDP. Also, supervisors can use both self assessments as a tool for coaching and mentoring their aspiring subordinates.

## Leadership Competency Self Assessment Directions

**DIRECTIONS:** Use the definitions and proficiency levels for a self assessment.

1. Determine your current employee level, using the Competency Chart and Leadership Journey on the next page.
2. Review your current job description to identify leadership competencies required.
3. Using the fill able assessment for your **employee level**, check the box next to your perceived proficiency.
4. Choose 2-3 of the competencies you wish to develop.
5. Share the self assessment with your supervisor if you wish or have them rate your proficiency on a blank set.
6. Research the types of learning experiences, courses, or programs that you would like to participate in. Use the Employee and Leadership Development catalog as a resource. Be sure to check for online (Aglearn) Skillsoft courses that specifically address competencies.
7. Document on your IDP.

Please note that the assessment does not provide a basis for acceptable level competencies. Your perceived level may be different than your supervisor. Use this as an opportunity to discuss your development and leadership skill gaps.

This assessment and all competencies are based on OPM competency definitions and proficiency levels.

# Competency Chart and Leadership Journey

## USDA Competency Chart and Employee Level

Employee Level	Responsibility/Role	Competencies
Crew/Team Leader	<i>Managing Projects</i>  Those who provide day-to-day guidance in work projects, but do not have supervisory responsibilities or conduct performance appraisals	Accountability Conflict Management Customer Service Decisiveness Influencing - Negotiating Team Building
All Employees	<i>Managing Self</i>  Employees within an organization who want to develop leadership characteristics	Continual Learning Flexibility Integrity - Honesty Interpersonal Skills (Fundamental) Oral Communication Problem Solving Public Service Motivation

## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Continual Learning** - Assesses and recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; pursues self-development.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Engages in systematic, self-directed training and development activities aligned with the strategic needs of the agency</p> <p>Applies what is learned in training to produce a major positive impact for the agency</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Completes leadership development program including training, coaching, and mentoring opportunities and applies key learnings</p> <p>Arranges and completes rotational assignment meeting own developmental goals and aligning with organizational strategies</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Completes human capital training required for managers and applies key learnings</p> <p>Recognizes areas needing improvement and takes training to increase skills</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Solicits periodic feedback to continually improve quality of own work</p> <p>Visits other work sites to gain understanding of staff functions and daily tasks</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Attends professional conferences to maintain technical knowledge</p> <p>Recognizes opportunities for self-development</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Flexibility** - Is open to change and new information; rapidly adapts to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Implements a successful action plan after a major organizational change</p> <p>Prioritizes, considers alternatives and responds quickly and effectively to unexpected and rapidly changing conditions</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Adjusts organizational priorities quickly as situations change</p> <p>Shifts agency goals and initiatives to align with administration and Congressional priorities</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Realigns resources to meet changing customer needs</p> <p>Takes feedback into consideration while implementing organizational change</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Uses staff feedback to streamline processes in order to meet deadlines</p> <p>Adjusts project plan based on input from staff and stakeholders</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Meets with team to adjust and coordinate schedules to accommodate all team members</p> <p>Adjusts staff assignments based on feedback and work load priorities</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Integrity/Honesty** - Behaves in an honest, fair, and ethical manner. Shows consistency in words and actions. Models high standards of ethics.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Promotes a climate of openness and honesty and does not penalize responsible dissent</p> <p>Does not acquiesce to inappropriate personal requests for favors, political pressure or promise of gain</p> <p>Displays fortitude to support ethical actions that may negatively impact self or stakeholders</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Instills a climate of trust by admitting own mistakes and taking responsibility for one's actions</p> <p>Discusses potential ethical problems and wrong doing with employees and responds appropriately</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Communicates honestly with employees regarding potential changes affecting the organization to ensure staff are treated fairly</p> <p>Investigates issues and takes corrective action, as appropriate</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Provides staff with accurate information about the vision of the agency and outlines changes in an upfront manner</p> <p>Remains fair and objective when determining skill set needed for projects to select effective team members</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Establishes open and honest communication with employees</p> <p>Addresses concerns with employee behavior in a confidential and respectful manner</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Interpersonal Skills** - Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations  Serves as a key resource and advises others	Interacts with public interest groups with opposing viewpoints while conducting the organization's work  Is consistently open and approachable when resolving highly sensitive and complex issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations  Generally requires little or no guidance	Treats individuals from all levels of the agency with courtesy and sensitivity  Meets with staff and listens to their perspective on organizational policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	Applies the competency in difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Makes self accessible to employees at all levels  Corrects employee mistakes in a courteous manner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Shows employees empathy and respect  Welcomes new employees into organization by explaining mission and agency goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	Applies the competency in the simplest situations  Requires close and extensive guidance	Interacts with co-workers in a tactful manner  Responds to employee inquiries	<input type="checkbox"/>



## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Oral Communication** - Makes clear and convincing oral presentations. Listens effectively; clarifies information as needed.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Presents complex information articulately when meeting with key executives or public officials regarding a high-visibility issue</p> <p>Testifies before Congress on a catastrophe's or significant issue's impact on the agency's responsibilities and requirements</p> <p>Communicates sensitive information of broad organizational impact on topics without precedence</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Conducts presentations and briefings for high-level agency officials</p> <p>Presents, explains, and defends agency positions and proposals to staff and stakeholders</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Communicates with committee regarding necessary actions and suggested approaches to accomplish committee objectives</p> <p>Conveys information clearly and concisely to ensure staff or team members remain focused on agenda items</p> <p>Explains benefits to stakeholders to gain acceptance of programmatic change</p> <p>Presents information, analyses, and recommendations to officials and stakeholders</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Communicates effectively with staff by conducting regular meetings to discuss initiatives and current events</p> <p>Explains and clarifies policy to affected parties</p> <p>Provides status updates to management team during quarterly division meeting</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Communicates agency goals and initiatives to staff in a clear and concise manner</p> <p>Communicates information regarding organizational changes to staff</p> <p>Updates supervisors on project status</p> <p>Listens actively to staff ideas and concerns regarding work-related issues</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Problem Solving** - Identifies and analyzes problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations  Serves as a key resource and advises others	Improves organizational efficiency by developing, planning, and implementing a multi-tier solution to complex or unprecedented problems  Develops and implements a remediation plan restoring stakeholder confidence in a critical agency program	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations  Generally requires little or no guidance	Synthesizes information from internal and external sources to develop an action plan addressing program issues  Addresses systemic barriers inhibiting the achievement of results by forming teams to conduct focus groups and develop solutions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	Applies the competency in difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Reconciles conflicting and/or incomplete information to develop solutions  Applies appropriate methodology to discover or identify policy issues and resource concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Addresses routine organizational problems by leading a team to brainstorm solutions  Establishes guidelines to clarify complex and/or controversial processes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	Applies the competency in the simplest situations  Requires close and extensive guidance	Proposes solution to improve customer satisfaction  Determines cause of workforce problem and recommends corrective action	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Public Service Motivation** -Shows a commitment to serve the public. Ensures that actions meet public needs; aligns organizational objectives and practices with public interests.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations  Serves as a key resource and advises others	Designs and develops programs to address critical community requirements  Elicits employees' commitment to serve the public good in responding to a disaster	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations  Generally requires little or no guidance	Partners with community leaders to develop neighborhood action plans  Cultivates relationships with community stakeholders to validate usefulness of proposed products and services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	Applies the competency in difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Approves funding documentation in accordance with procedures to ensure public resources are utilized appropriately  Improves processes used to monitor contractors and vendors for supplies, services, and/or equipment to ensure government funds are expended appropriately	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Reviews unit's policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure they are consistent with public needs  Determines community needs by surveying citizens	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	Applies the competency in the simplest situations  Requires close and extensive guidance	Responds promptly and accurately to public inquiries about agency policies  Suggests gaining feedback from public regarding new policy	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Resilience** - Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations  Serves as a key resource and advises others	Defends current policy to high-level officials by explaining legal ramifications of suggested changes and the potential impact of legal action on the organization  Demonstrates persistence when providing rationale to staff during times of significant organizational change	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations  Generally requires little or no guidance	Responds to setbacks by developing alternative approaches to determine the best course of action  Maintains unit's effectiveness, quality, and morale during organizational change  Cultivates internal and external stakeholders to develop strategies for obtaining funding from alternate sources following budget cuts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	Applies the competency in difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Perseveres on project despite changing objectives, deliverables, and deadlines  Develops strategies using existing resources for achieving objectives following budget cuts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Meets with employees resistant to organizational change to address concerns  Maintains composure and direction in high-pressure situations  Accepts negative feedback in a constructive manner and adjusts behavior accordingly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	Applies the competency in the simplest situations  Requires close and extensive guidance	Reduces project deliverables following funding cut  Continues presentation to customer despite technical difficulties with audio-visual system	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Technical Credibility** - Understands and appropriately applies principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Serves as expert consultant to external managers on complex and controversial matters</p> <p>Uses expert knowledge in subject matter area to develop new approaches to resolve technical problems</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Provides expertise in technical subject area to an organization or team</p> <p>Develops technical portions of agency guidelines for internal and external use</p> <p>Evaluates, incorporates, and communicates the latest developments in specialty area through agency guidelines and criteria</p> <p>Provides technical expertise in the design and implementation of agency-wide projects</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Resolves technical issues promptly by determining and correcting problems</p> <p>Advises staff on solutions to complex problems, projects, or programs</p> <p>Uses technical expertise to identify and resolve conflicts between theories, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Provides staff with feedback and support on technical issues</p> <p>Makes technically sound recommendations to develop effective work products</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Interacts with staff to understand technical aspects of job duties</p> <p>Gathers technical information from internal and external stakeholders</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ALL EMPLOYEES

**Written Communication** - Writes in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations  Serves as a key resource and advises others	Writes, reviews, and publishes advanced research findings and guidelines and made available to other groups and agencies  Writes white paper on key agency objectives for use by high-level officials	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations  Generally requires little or no guidance	Writes complex technical reports using clear terminology and a concise format for use by high-level decision makers  Reviews technical reports, edits materials, and provides suggestions to improve clarity while ensuring documents are targeted to the intended audience	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	Applies the competency in difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Develops documents outlining agency mission and goals for use by the local community  Writes reports and position papers outlining various viewpoints on controversial subjects	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Writes daily briefs or guidelines to ensure employees are provided with updated information  Develops press releases to ensure important issues are addressed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	Applies the competency in the simplest situations  Requires close and extensive guidance	Summarizes recommendations made in annual report  Drafts checklist to track project status	<input type="checkbox"/>

## CREW/TEAM LEADER

**Accountability** - Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost-effective results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Revises and communicates to employees expectations and methods for achieving results in light of failed or delayed agency-level project</p> <p>Administers and provides oversight of a new complex procedure which delegates responsibility for compliance to various agencies or parties</p> <p>Accomplishes cultural change of accountability among staff by defining roles and responsibilities to ensure agency goals are met</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Provides and promotes position information across divisions to educate staff on respective duties, performance expectations and consequent impact on accomplishment of agency goals</p> <p>Holds staff accountable for new performance standards and expectations by taking action with employees not meeting standards</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Implements new guidelines and procedures mandated by Congress</p> <p>Accepts responsibility when missed deadlines affect major project outcome</p> <p>Develops and implements internal controls for pilot program to manage potential barriers to implementation</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Investigates claims of employee violations and encourages staff to take responsibility for actions</p> <p>Outlines goals and assesses workgroup progress towards goal achievement</p> <p>Plans and researches safety issues and contacts agency to ensure safety standards are fully utilized</p> <p>Distributes work load among staff to ensure staff meet key deliverables</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Maintains confidentiality of sensitive information by establishing new policies and procedures for handling such information</p> <p>Delegates work to staff to ensure responsibilities are completed</p> <p>Meets weekly with team to monitor progress of work plans</p> <p>Outlines written policies and procedures to ensure consistent adherence by staff</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## CREW/TEAM LEADER

**Conflict Management** -Encourages creative tension and differences of opinions. Anticipates and takes steps to prevent counter-productive confrontations. Manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Leads managers through consensus process on agency's response to controversial issues</p> <p>Resolves conflicts arising at the agency level due to competing objectives, limited resources, or differing perspectives</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Recognizes conflict and takes steps to address issues by meeting the involved parties</p> <p>Mitigates staff concerns regarding agency-wide issues by investigating allegations and taking appropriate action</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Meets with employees and addresses concerns regarding critical issues in an open and honest manner</p> <p>Takes action to address behavior issues to ensure employees treat each other with respect</p> <p>Manages conflict among team members by utilizing mediation techniques</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Implements changes to ensure work environment is fair and equitable based on employee concerns</p> <p>Ensures employees receive mediation to resolve issues affecting the workgroup</p> <p>Resolves issues by meeting one-on-one with team member</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Addresses employee concerns by providing accurate information to reduce conflict or concern within workplace</p> <p>Takes action to address employee grievances</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## CREW/TEAM LEADER

**Customer Service** - Anticipates and meets the needs of both internal and external customers. Delivers high-quality products and services; is committed to continuous improvement.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Develops innovative customer service initiative which significantly improves quality and enhances customer satisfaction</p> <p>Implements organization-wide customer service initiative to raise employee skill levels to improve customer service</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Anticipates growing customer needs and expectations to continuously improve product development and service delivery</p> <p>Creates work group consisting of stakeholders and neutral parties to develop solutions to customer service barriers</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Designs and implements guidelines to improve products and services</p> <p>Develops customer satisfaction surveys, analyzes results, and makes necessary improvements</p> <p>Addresses customer service deficiencies by involving employees to identify solutions</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Develops guides and user manuals for customers</p> <p>Ensures products and services comply with customer requirements</p> <p>Streamlines procedures based on customer feedback</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Addresses customer questions in a timely manner</p> <p>Updates agency website to reflect changes to services</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## CREW/TEAM LEADER

**Decisiveness** - Makes well-informed, effective, and timely decisions, even when data are limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; perceives the impact and implications of decisions.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Uses limited information to solve a variety of complex problems during a crisis situation</p> <p>Solves highly-complex technical, administrative, and policy issues involved in the implementation of new systems and programs by making timely decisions</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Changes course of action despite public support when new information indicates previous strategy would not succeed</p> <p>Makes timely decisions using available information regarding severe operating budget reductions including possible reductions in force (RIFs)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Decides to redesign current performance appraisal system to better meet organizational needs</p> <p>Makes the decision to solve controversial workplace issue by establishing an employee task force</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Makes sound and timely decisions for a project, team, or work unit</p> <p>Seeks out best practices to make organizational decisions</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Develops meeting agenda and determines topics for group decision making</p> <p>Determines the appropriate individuals needed for a decision making process</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## CREW/TEAM LEADER

**Influencing/Negotiating** - Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations  Serves as a key resource and advises others	Convinces colleagues and management to accept recommendations involving substantive agency resources and changes in established practice  Influences external executive decision makers to achieve substantive goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations  Generally requires little or no guidance	Negotiates with leaders for changes to reorganization design based on feedback from subordinates  Develops plan and convinces high-level agency officials to adopt approach by meeting with officials to explain points  Guides a team of experts to provide advice on, and build credibility for, a multi-level negotiation process	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	Applies the competency in difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Develops trust among various parties involved in a negotiation process  Persuades manager to change leadership position or approach to better fit a situational need  Represents the organization in reaching agreements with other organizations and contractors  Obtains union buy-in for a change in working conditions by using open and honest communication and by carefully listening to the union leadership's ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations  Requires frequent guidance	Meets with team leaders to gain buy in for new direction of division  Uses factual information to support own point of view when meeting with team members	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	Applies the competency in the simplest situations  Requires close and extensive guidance	Explains to staff the importance of their involvement on high stakes projects  Recommends employee seek professional assistance for personal issues affecting work performance  Justifies request for internal resources to accomplish goals	<input type="checkbox"/>

## CREW/TEAM LEADER

**Team Building** - Inspires and fosters team commitment, spirit, pride, and trust. Facilitates cooperation and motivates team members to accomplish group goals.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations	Check
Level 5 Expert	<p>Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations</p> <p>Serves as a key resource and advises others</p>	<p>Leads a team to address controversial agency-wide legislative and regulatory policy issues</p> <p>Inspires interagency team to accomplish long term strategic goals</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4 Advanced	<p>Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations</p> <p>Generally requires little or no guidance</p>	<p>Promotes cohesiveness of a dysfunctional team by defining roles and responsibilities of each team member and establishing overall objectives</p> <p>Leads teams to implement Congressional programs and interact with legislative representatives</p> <p>Motivates agency-wide team by assigning work based on team member skill level and area of interest</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>Applies the competency in difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Includes entire team in decision-making process when developing mission and goals for the division</p> <p>Creates senior-level teams to design and implement requirements for new systems and procedures</p> <p>Leads team from various organizational units to create new systems or processes</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2 Basic	<p>Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations</p> <p>Requires frequent guidance</p>	<p>Encourages staff to share skills and abilities within work group to facilitate completion of challenging tasks</p> <p>Forms teams to identify and address agency concerns</p> <p>Informs team members of issues requiring resolution and considers input</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 Awareness	<p>Applies the competency in the simplest situations</p> <p>Requires close and extensive guidance</p>	<p>Works with team to implement operating procedures within agency</p> <p>Suggests utilizing team building exercises to improve office dynamics</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Other Self Assessment Resources

There are a variety of instruments you can use and actions you can take to assess your current competency level. A self-assessment is scored and interpreted by the individual completing the questionnaire. Self-assessments can provide immediate insight into leadership characteristics, how to use job assignments as opportunities to develop valuable skills, and preferred learning behaviors and styles.

Give copies of this self-assessment to a colleague, your supervisor, or a customer and ask that person to rate you as well.

If you supervise others, use a 360° Assessment to assess your leadership proficiency.

If your work unit or program has administered a customer survey, use information from that survey if it refers to you or to your position.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

What's My Communication Style

Strengths Finder

*Center for Creative Leadership suggests the following self-assessments*

Learning Tactics Inventory

Job Challenge Profile

Campbell Leadership Descriptor

Campbell TM Interest & Skill Survey (CISS)

A GOOGLE search will help with finding the above assessment resources

# Experience Opportunities

Training doesn't always have to be formal training. Explore ideas in the following list for additional ways to stretch and develop competencies through experiences.

- Work groups --serve on a special work group to use your current skills in a new environment.
- Teams/Projects --request to join a special team, project or assignment
- Focus groups
- Cross-Training --acquire knowledge and skills from coworkers, usually with similar grade levels and experiences. A new skill can make an employee more valuable
- Details-check outreach database
- Shadow assignments - Designed to give you exposure to managerial duties, responsibilities, and to show you different approaches to handling them. It is also designed to provide exposure and some experience in a different unit than your own.
- Developmental stretch assignments
- Be a Mentor -- Find a Mentor: Mentoring - The mentoring process links a less experienced employee with a more experienced one to help facilitate professional growth. A mentor is someone not in the employee's chain of command who is in a position to help with job and career issues, and who is committed to doing so. For more information or to register to participate in the USDA Mentoring Program please visit the USDA Mentoring Portal at the following link:  
<http://www.eservices.usda.gov/usdamentoring/>.
- Be coached -- Engage as a Coach -- Through a highly competitive process, coaches are chosen by the Forest Service Executive Leadership Team based on their dedication to other people's careers. Coaches sharpen listening skills, and learn to ask probing questions. Learning coaches are not mentors, counselors, or life coaches. A USDA formal coaching program is currently in development phase.
- Complete online courses
- Join professional organizations
- Participate in Supervisor training
- Serve as a representative on a special emphasis committee

For more information on The Virtual University School of Talent Management and other developmental programs, please visit the Virtual University website located at the following link:

<http://www.dm.usda.gov/employ/vu/index.php>.

